DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 244 297 CS 208 352

AUTHOR Salwen, Michael B.
TITLE The Reporting of Public Opinion Poll Stories in the Detroit Daily Press during Presidential Election Years: A Longitudinal Analysis.
PUB DATE Aug 84
NOTE 25p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (67th, Gainesville, FL, August 5-8, 1984).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Content Analysis; *Elections; *Journalism; *Media Research; *Newspapers; *News Reporting; Politics; *Public Opinion
IDENTIFIERS *Opinion Polls; Presidential Campaigns

ABSTRACT

A study tested the hypotheses (1) that reporting of methodological information needed to gauge the accuracy of public opinion poll stories in metropolitican daily newspapers improved significantly during the presidential election years from 1968 to 1980, and (2) that these newspapers were more likely to report this information in their own inhouse polls than in wire service and syndicated polls. Data were gathered from an analysis of all stories in the front sections of two Detroit, Michigan newspapers for a four-month period preceding the presidential elections from 1968 to 1980. Results supported both hypotheses. The findings suggest that the newspapers did a better job reporting poll stories over the years because of an increased awareness among journalists and journalism educators of the need to provide readers with information to evaluate public opinion poll stories. In addition, they suggest that the newspapers did a better job of reporting their own poll stories than wire service poll stories because they viewed inhouse polling as prestigious. (Author/FL)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)
X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

ED244297

THE REPORTING OF PUBLIC OPINION POLL STORIES IN THE DETROIT DAILY PRESS DURING PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION YEARS: A LONGITUDINAL ANALYSIS

by

Michael B. Salwen
School of Journalism
Michigan State University

Presented to the Newspaper Division, Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida, 1984

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Michael B. Salwen

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

CS 208 352

THE REPORTING OF PUBLIC OPINION POLL STORIES IN THE DETROIT DAILY PRESS DURING PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION YEARS: A LONGITUDINAL ANALYSIS

ABSTRACT

The present study hypothesized that the reporting of methodological information needed to gauge the accuracy of public opinion poll stories in metropolitan daily newspapers improved significantly during the presidential election years from 1968 to 1980. It also hypothesized that these papers were more likely to report this information in their own in-house polls than in wire-service and syndicated polls. To test these hypotheses, the largest daily newspapers in Michigan were analyzed. Both hypotheses were supported. It was suggested that the newspapers did a better job reporting poll stories over the years because of an increased awareness among journalists and journalism educators to provide readers with needed information to evaluate public opinion poll stories. It was suggested that newspapers did a better job reporting their own poll stories than wire-service or syndicated poll stories because they viewed in-house polling as prestigious.

The belief that public opinion influences national policy in a democratic society underlies all scholarly research into the topic. Public opinion polls, conducted in a systematic manner, are regarded as accurate gauges of public opinion by scholars, political decisionmakers and the public. But many critics worry that published polls can be misleading. Subtle differences in question wording, type of population sampled and dates when the audience members were sampled may lead to differing and frequently misleading results.[1]

Accuracy in reporting poll stories is important because a substantial body of research shows that many voters rely on poll results to make voting decisions.[2] Politicians, too, have been accused of formulating policy according to public opinion poll results, such as when columnist Jack Anderson accused President Carter of planning a "John Wayne-style assault on Iran" during the hostage crisis to improve his sagging popularity in the polls:[3]

> Jimmy Carter studies the polls the way gypsies read tea leaves. The secret soundings of his favorite pollster, Pat Caddell, go directly to the President for his personal scrutiny. These polls show a national crisis would produce a rally-round-the-flag reaction, which would boost his re-election prospects.[4]

This paper investigated whether large-city, metropolitan daily newspapers provide their readers with adequate information to evaluate the quality of poll stories. It did not attempt to evaluate such methodological matters as whether the sample size was adequate or whether the population sampled was appropriate;

rather, it focused on whether sufficient information was provided to the readers to assess the accuracy of the published stories.

Price and Rippey conducted similar studies more than a quarter-century apart, gauging newspaper executives' opinions about public opinion poll stories.[5] Price found strong resentment against established polling organizations -- a not surprising finding in light of the polls' prediction of Truman's defeat five years earlier. Price also found that the majority of executives, even those on metropolitan papers, admitted knowing little or nothing about precision polling techniques. Most of the executives said their man-on-the-street polls were superior to those of the professional polling organizations. By contrast, Rippey found that scientific polling was widely accepted among newspaper executives and editors as a valid technique. Nevertheless, he found that the majority of those he sampled relied on their own staffs to conduct and report polls. This, he suggested, called into question the quality of in-house polls and the reporting of poll stories in general.

Auh and Wilhoit examined the reporting of poll stories in twenty-four metropolitan papers during congressional elections in 1970.[6] They found the poll stories failed to report a considerable amount of needed methodological data. For instance, only 44 percent reported sample size, only 33 percent reported the exact dates the polls were taken and less than 15 percent reported the exact population. Research conducted prior to Auh

and Wilhoit in the 1950s and 1960s found a similar lack of methodological information in newspaper poll stories.[7]

Most of the research suggests that poorly reported public opinion poll stories are the result of ignorance rather than bad intent. Bishop and Brown, however, found a relationship between poorly reported poll stories and biased reporting.[8] In a study of 26 daily newspapers in Michigan during the state's 1966 gubernatorial election, the researchers found that poorly reported polls were generally favorable to the Republican candidate, George Romney, who won the election. Twenty of these papers supported Romney in editorial endorsements. The researchers singled out the controversial "Poll of Election Trends," sponsored by the Detroit News, for special castigation. As a result of the News' polls, the Democratic candidate, Zolton Ferency, took Market Opinion Research to court. Ferency sought to have the Detroit-based company reveal sample size, the number of people contacted, the method used to contact the respondents and the name of the reporter who wrote the analysis. The court held against Ferency, maintaining that any injury he sustained was speculative.

Miller and Hurd examined how 116 polls in three large metropolitan papers from 1972 to 1979 conformed to the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) guidelines.[9] They found that conformity was better with election polls than non-election polls; and that newspapers were more likely to conform to the guidelines when they reported their own in-house polls than when they reported polls from the wire services or syndicated sources.

The finding that in-house polls were reported better than other polls was not surprising in light of the considerable expenditure of resources involved with in-house polling and the prestige attached to in-house polling. Such polls are likely to receive more space and prominence, and less likely to have methodological information needed for understanding the polls edited out.[10]

In summary, the similar studies conducted by Price and Rippey suggest that newspaper coverage of public opinion polls has probably improved over the years. Several books on polling methods that first appeared during the 1970s aimed primarily for journalists and journalism students also gives reason to believe that the situation has improved over the years, and still is improving.[11]

In light of the lack of empirical evidence showing that the reporting of public opinion polls has improved in large, daily metropolitan newspapers since the early 1970s, and whether these papers do a better job in reporting their own polls than they do reporting wire-service and syndicated polls, the following hypotheses were tested:

H_1: The reporting of needed methodological information in public opinion poll stories in daily metropolitan newspapers improved significantly during the presidential election years from 1968 to 1980.

H_2: Daily metropolitan newspapers reported more needed methodological information in their own (in-house) polls than they did in wire-service and syndicated polls during the presidential election years from 1968 to 1980.

METHOD

To test the hypotheses, 208 poll stories were analyzed. Of these stories, 97 percent dealt with political topics (e.g., an election, a candidate, or a political issue). All the stories in the front sections of both of Detroit's daily newspapers, The News and the Free Press, were examined from July 25 to the Monday before election day during the presidential election years from 1968 to 1980. If a story jumped, the whole story was examined, even if it jumped beyond the front section. Only headlined stories that focused on poll results were examined. Poll stories that clearly gave the caveat that they were not scientific or not representative of public opinion were not examined.

Poll stories were examined during the period of a presidential election campaign because it was assumed that the campaign would be treated as an important political subject, and newspapers would be more aware of their duty to inform the public with accurate political information during this period than during a non-campaign period. The analysis began in 1968 because, as the literature review noted, starting in the early 1970s several survey research books gained popularity in journalistic circles. The Detroit papers were selected because they were thought to be representative of large-circulation, metropolitan daily newspapers in the United States, the universe to which the sample hoped to generalize. Although examining newspapers in only one geographic location may limit the generalizability of the study, it gives the study a degree of ecological validity.

The Detroit News, which has a daily circulation of about 650,000 and a Sunday circulation of about 850,000, is the largest daily in the state. It is also the largest paper in the Evening News Association group. The Free Press, with a daily circulation of about 635,000 and a Sunday circulation of about 770,000, is one of the largest dailies in one of the nation's largest newspaper chains, Knight-Ridder. The primary circulation area for both newspapers is the Detroit metropolitan area, but both papers circulate widely throughout most of the state.[12] The front sections were examined because many communications researchers maintain that the most salient items in a newspaper are displayed in the front section. They further maintain that audience members understand this media salience cue.[13]

Each poll story was coded for the newpaper it appeared in, the month, the date of the month, the day of the week, the year, the page of first appearance, the headline, the type of poll story (political or non-political) and source of information (in-house,[14] wire service, syndicated or other). In addition, each story was coded for the appearance or nonappearance of eight manifest-level variables that made up the construct of "quality." These variables, based largely on the AAPOR guidelines, were 1) sample size, 2) exact population, 3) exact wording, 4) dates when the poll was taken, 5) error margin (confidence interval or margin of error or both), 6) sponsor,[15] 7) method of contacting the respondents and 8) response rate (i.e., the percentage of the respondents contacted who actually responded).

Thirty-three, or 16 percent, of the poll stories were randomly selected and recoded by an independent coder to check for reliability. There were 264 remeasurements (8 x 33), of which 242 were in agreement with the first coder, for an overall intercoder reliability measure of 92 percent. The intercoder reliability varied somewhat for each of the eight variables: for response rate, it was 100 percent; sponsor, 97 percent; error margin, 97 percent; sample size, 97 percent; method, 91 percent, population, 88 percent; dates, 85 percent; wording, 79 percent.

RESULTS

Chi-square statistics were computed and are presented in tables 1.1 to 1.8 to test the first hypothesis. The appearance or nonappearance of each of the eight variables that comprise the construct of "quality" are reported during the four election-year periods. The significance levels are reported at .1, .05, .01 and .001. Six of the eight variables that comprise the construct of quality are significant at the .1 level or above in the predicted direction. The two variables that did not show improvement in reporting during the years examined are wording and sponsorship. During most of the periods examined, about one-third of the stories reported question wording. While the variable of sponsorship did not show significant improvement during the periods examined, it was consistently high during all years. The variable of population showed the greatest improvment, with the percentage more than doubling from 1968 to 1980.

TABLES 1.1 to 1.8 ABOUT HERE

Tables 2.1 to 2.7 present the results for the second hypothesis. There is no table reporting percentage of stories by sponsor since all in-house polls were assumed to be sponsored by the reporting newspaper and all syndicated stories were assumed to be sponsored by the polling organization, unless otherwise noted.

TABLES 2.1 to 2.7 ABOUT HERE

Five of the seven variables were significant in the predicted direction at the .1 level or above. Four of these were significant at the .001 level. The two variables that did not show significant improvement were dates and response rate. About two-thirds of the polls reported the dates when the polls were taken. The response rate was rarely reported.

Since replication is an important component of research, the percentage of public opinion polls stories reporting the eight variables in this study are presented in table 3 beside results from similar studies by Auh and Wilhoit and Miller and Hurd.[16] The Auh and Wilhoit study examined poll stories in 24 metropolitan dailies--representing 17 states--during the 1970 congressional elections. Papers ranging from the Miami Herald to the Anchorage Times were examined. The Miller and Hurd study examined poll stories in the Chicago Tribune, Los Angeles Times and Atlanta Constitution from 1972 to 1979.

TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE

Auh and Wilhoit's findings appear to be generally lower than the findings in the other studies. This may be at least partially explained by the fact that their study included the smallest circulation papers in the three studies. Small circulation papers would probably be less likely to provide needed methodological information in their stories than larger papers. The Miller and Hurd study by contrast looked at the largest and most prestigious papers in the three studies being compared. That may at least partially explain why most of their findings were higher than those in the other studies. The reporting of sponsorship was highest in the present study probably because of a difference in operational definitions. All in-house polls in the present study were assumed to be sponsored by the reporting newspaper and all wire-service polls were assumed to be sponsored by the polling organization, unless otherwise specified. Miller and Hurd also assumed that all syndicated polls were sponsored by the polling organization.

DISCUSSION

The dramatic improvement in the reporting of methodological data in public opinion poll stories in the Detroit dailies gives strong support to the first hypothesis. The newspapers examined were assumed to be representative of large-circulation, metropolitan newspapers in the United States, which suggests that the findings here may be representative of a national trend. The improvement may be at least partially explained by an increased awareness among journalists, journalism educators and journalism

students to provide readers with needed methodological information to evaluate the quality of published poll stories.

Some methodological information appeared to be reported quite often in many of the poll stories, such as sample size, population, dates, sponsor and method. These types of variables are likely to be reported by journalists whether they have a knowledge of precision journalism or not. They constitute the who (population sampled and sponsor) when (dates) and how (method) components of journalism. Many of these variables appeared in the lead. Technical information such as error margin and response rate are not likely to be included in a poll story unless the writer or editor is aware of precision journalism techniques. Both response rate and error margin were reported infrequently, although the use of a longitudinal design showed that the reporting of these variables appear to be improving.

The overall better job in reporting in-house polls compared to wire-service and syndicated polls supports the second hypothesis. This finding suggests that newspapers invest more prestige, time and energy in their own polls compared to wire-service and syndicated polls. This may also be due to the fact that in-house polls frequently concern local elections and issues that are likely to receive more prominent coverage and space in the front sections than national and international poll stories. Because they appeared to receive more space, the likelihood of having more methodological information is increased. Although the content analysis did not measure column inches or paragraphs, other observations give support to the notion that in-house polls are

likely to receive extended coverage. Over 72 percent of the in-house polls appeared on the front page, compared to 19 percent of the combined wire-service and syndicated polls; 71 percent of the in-house polls jumped to another page, compared to 12 percent of the wire-service and syndicated polls; and finally 42 percent of the in-house polls appeared on Sunday, when newspapers are likely to feature prominent local enterprise stories, compared to 25 percent of the wire-service and syndicated polls.

It should be emphasized that neither of the papers examined reported man-on-the-street polls. Almost all the in-house polls were conducted by professional polling organizations, and many times a representative from the organization wrote the story. During all the years examined The News hired Market Opinion (MOR) of Detroit to do its polling, and often Frederick P. Currier, the president of the organization, wrote the story. Staff writer Philip Meyer of the Free Press, who later wrote a book on public opinion polling, wrote several poll stories for the paper. He frequently sought the help of noted survey researcher Angus Campbell, of the Survey Research Center at the University of Michigan, and cited him in his stories. In 1980, The News featured political poll stories by Michael Traugott, a researcher at the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan. Many of the stories he wrote were perfect in terms of meeting the eight variables comprising the construct of "quality" in this study. This information suggests that the newspapers examined in this study allowed skilled survey researchers at least modest leeway in presenting the final story.

Even though this study suggests that the reporting of public opinion polls in metropolitan dailies during presidential election years has improved over the past 12 years, the reporting of a few variables remains abysmally bad. Even in 1980 more than half the poll stories did not report margin of error and response rate. Perhaps the editors felt that these terms are too technical for many readers to understand. However, as many texts on polling point out, it is the responsibility of journalists to write technical information clearly in a way most readers can understand.

Future research should investigate whether metropolitan daily newspapers do indeed regard in-house polling as prestigous. Also, research should go beyond examining large, metropolitan newspapers and examine how small- and moderate-size dailies as well as weeklies report public opinion poll stories. Longitudinal research should further investigate whether the indications of change found in this study apply to other large, metropolitan dailies. Finally, research should move away from examining the poll story as the unit of analysis and examine audience members' perceptions of poll stories. In particular, experimental research should investigate whether the inclusion of needed methodological information in poll stories leads to increased understanding and credibility among the readers.

TABLE 1.1

Percentage of Stories Reporting and Not Reporting Sample Size

	1968	1972	1976	1980	Row Totals
Reported	56%	69	64	88	68
Not Reported	44	31	36	12	32
	n=48	n=59	n=67	n=34	N=208

$X^2=9.92$ df=3 $p<.05$

TABLE 1.2

Percentage of Stories Reporting and Not Reporting Population

	1968	1972	1976	1980	Row Totals
Reported	42%	80	79	88	72
Not Reported	58	20	21	12	28
	n=48	n=59	n=67	n=34	N=208

$X^2=29.84$ df=3 $p<.001$

TABLE 1.3

Percentage of Stories Reporting and Not Reporting Wording

	1968	1972	1976	1980	Row Totals
Reported	31%	36	18	35	29
Not Reported	69	64	82	65	71
	n=48	n=59	n=67	n=34	N=208

$X^2=6.04$ df=3 ns

TABLE 1.4

Percentage of Stories Reporting and Not Reporting Dates

	1968	1972	1976	1980	Row Totals
Reported	46%	66	64	74	62
Not Reported	54	34	36	26	38
	n=48	n=59	n=67	n=34	N=208

$X^2=7.75$ df=3 $p<.1$

TABLE 1.5

Percentage of Stories Reporting and Not Reporting Error Margin

	1968	1972	1976	1980	Row Totals
Reported	4%	36	24	38	25
Not Reported	96	64	76	62	75
	n=48	n=59	n=67	n=34	N=208

$X^2=15.71$ df=3 $p<.01$

TABLE 1.6

Percentage of Stories Reporting and Not Reporting Sponsor

	1968	1972	1976	1980	Row Totals
Reported	92%	97%	99%	100	97
Not Reported	8	3	1	0	3
	n=48	n=59	n=67	n=34	N=208

$X^2=5.51$ df=3 ns

TABLES 1.7

Percentage of Stories Reporting and Not Reporting Method

	1968	1972	1976	1980	Row Totals
Reported	23%	49	49	62	45
Not Reported	77	51	51	38	55
	n=48	n=59	n=67	n=34	N=208

$X^2=14.21$ df=3 $p<.01$

TABLES 1.8

Percentage of Stories Reporting and Not Reporting Response Rate

	1968	1972	1976	1980	Row Totals
Reported	0%	2	0	8	2
Not Reported	100	98	100	92	98
	n=48	n=59	n=67	n=34	N=208

$X^2=10.95$ df=3 $p<.05$

TABLE 2.1

Percentage of Stories Reporting and Not Reporting Sample Size

	In-House	Wire	Syndicated	Row Totals
Reported	76%	65	55	68
Not Reported	24	35	45	32
	n=95	n=57	n=49	N=201*

$X^2=5.61$ df=2 $p<.1$

TABLE 2.2

Percentage of Stories Reporting and Not Reporting Population

	In-House	Wire	Syndicated	Row Totals
Reported	91%	58	55	73
Not Reported	9	42	45	27
	n=95	n=57	n=49	N=201

$X^2=29.49$ df=2 $p<.001$

TABLE 2.3

Percentage of Stories Reporting and Not Reporting Wording

	In-House	Wire	Syndicated	Row Totals
Reported	38%	5	31	27
Not Reported	62	95	69	73
	n=95	n=57	n=49	N=201

$X^2=19.78$ df=2 $p<.001$

*The total does not equal 208 because seven stories were coded as "other" than in-house, syndicated or wire (e.g., combination wire and newspaper, and not identifiable).

TABLE 2.4

Percentage of Stories Reporting and Not Reporting Dates

	In-House	Wire	Syndicated	Row Totals
Reported	65%	63	59	63
Not Reported	35	37	41	37
	n=95	n=57	n=49	N=201

$X^2 = .47$ df=2 ns

TABLE 2.5

Percentage of Stories Reporting and Not Reporting Error Margin

	In-House	Wire	Syndicated	Row Totals
Reported	47%	7%	2%	25
Not Reported	53	93	98	75
	n=95	n=57	n=49	N=201

$X^2 = 49.13$ df=2 $p < .001$

TABLE 2.6

Percentage of Stories Reporting and Not Reporting Method

	In-House	Wire	Syndicated	Row Totals
Reported	66%	32	24	46
Not Reported	34	68	76	54
	n=95	n=57	n=49	N=201

$X^2 = 29.64$ df=2 $p < .001$

TABLE 2.7

Percentage of Stories Reporting and Not Reporting Response Rate

	In-House	Wire	Syndicated	Row Totals
Reported	3%	2	0	2
Not Reported	97	98	100	98
	n=95	n=57	n=[illegible]	N=201

X^2=1.66 df=2 ns

TABLE 3

Percentages of Public Opinion Poll Stories Reporting Needed Methodological Information in This Study and Similar Studies

Category	Auh and Wilhoit* (1970)	Miller and Hurd** Hurd (1971-79)	Present Study 1968	1972	1976	1980	All Years Combined
Sample Size	56%	89%	56%	69%	64%	88%	68%
Sponsor	44	80	92	97	98	100	97
Wording	14	71	31	36	18	35	29
Dates	33	76	46	66	64	74	62
Population	14	91	42	80	79	88	72
Error Margin	9	31	4	36	24	38	25
Response Rate	***	***	0	2	0	8	2
	N=43	N=116	N=48	N=59	N=67	N=34	N=208

*Taik Sup Auh and G. Cleveland Wilhoit, "Metropolitan Daily Newspaper Treatment of Political Polls During the 1970 Elections," Paper presented to the Association for Education in Journalism, Fort Collins, Colorodo, 1973.

**M. Mark Miller and Robert Hurd, "Conformity to AAPOR Standards in Newspaper Reporting of Public Opinion Polls," Public Opinion Quarterly, 46:243-249 (1982).

***Not Reported

FOOTNOTES

[1]"Code of Professional Ethics," American Association for Public Opinion Research, Princeton, N.J., April 1980; Philip Meyer, "Truth in Polling," Columbia Journalism Review, Summer 1968, 20-23.

[2]Charles K. Atkin, "The Impact of Political Poll Reports on Candidate and Issue Preferences," Journalism Quarterly 46:515-521 (1964); Charles K. Atkin, "Some Effects of Public Opinion Polls on Voter Images and Intentions," Paper presented to the Association for Education in Journalism, Lawrence, Kansas, 1968.

[3]Jack Anderson, "Polls Moved Carter Toward Iran Attack," Detroit Free Press, August 22, 1980, p. All.

[4]Ibid.

[5]Warren Price, "What Daily Newspaper Executives Think of Public Opinion Polls," Journalism Quarterly, 30:287-299 (1953); John N. Rippey, "Use of Polls as a Reporting Tool," Journalism Quarterly, 57:642-656, 721 (1980).

[6]Taik Sup Auh and G. Cleveland Wilhoit, "Metropolitan Daily Newspaper Treatment of Political Polls During the 1970 Elections," Paper presented to the Association for Education in Journalism, Fort Collins, Colorado, 1973.

[7]Allan Greenberg and Daniel Lissance, "The Accuracy of a Journalistic Poll," Public Opinion Quarterly, 19:45-52 (1955); Gerbert D. Wiebe, "The New York Times and Public Opinion Research," Journalism Quarterly, 44:654-658 (1967).

[8]Robert L. Bishop and Robert L. Brown, "Michigan Newspaper Bias in the 1966 Campaign," Journalism Quarterly, 45:337-338 (1968).

[9]M. Mark Miller and Robert Hurd, "Conformity to AAPOR Standards in Newspaper Reporting of Public Opinion Polls," Public Opinion Quarterly, 46:243-249 (1982).

[10]Charles K. Atkin and James Gaudino, "The Impact of Polling on the Mass Media," in L. John Martin, ed., The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences, 472: 119-128 (1984).

[11]Philip Meyer, Precision Journalism (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1973); Maxwell E. McCombs, Donald L. Shaw and David Grey, Handbook of Reporting Methods (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1976); G. Cleveland Wilhoit and David H. Weaver, Newsroom Guide to Polls and Surveys (Washington, D.C.: American Newspaper Publishers Asscciation, 1980).

[12]Editor & Publisher International Yearbook (New York: Editor & Publisher, 1982).

[13]Donald L. Shaw and Maxwell E. McCombs, eds., The Emergence of American Political Issues: The Agenda-Setting Function of the Press (St. Paul, MN.: West Publishing Co., 1977).

[14]In-house polls were operationalized as those polls sponsored and/or conducted by the newspaper reporting the poll story.

[15]All in-house polls were assumed to be sponsored by the reporting newspaper and all syndicated polls were assumed to be sponsored by the polling organization, unless otherwise noted.

[16]Auh and Wilhoit, op. cit.; Miller and Hurd, op. cit.